



The State of New Hampshire
Department of Environmental Services



Michael P. Nolin
Commissioner

January 4, 2006

The Honorable Lawrence Ross, Chairman
NH House of Representatives
Science, Technology and Energy Committee
Legislative Office Building, Room 304

RE: HB 1146 An act establishing a committee to study renewable portfolio standards.

Dear Chairman Ross and Members of the Committee:

The New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services (NHDES) appreciates the opportunity to testify regarding HB1146 that would establish a committee to study renewable portfolio standards. DES supports exploration of a renewable portfolio standard for New Hampshire, as it would encourage the use of less polluting renewable fuels and the development of associated technologies.

The NHDES supports the continued use of renewable energy systems to help reduce reliance on fossil fuels for power generation. The impacts to human health and the environment from fossil-fuel emissions are also a major concern. These impacts include increased incidence of respiratory illness (asthma) and other health related problems, ground level ozone, acid rain, regional haze, and climate change. In addition to environmental and public health benefits, generation of electricity from renewable energy resources also improves energy security by improving fuel diversity and encouraging alternatives to fossil fuels for distributed energy generation. The continued operation of less polluting energy generation technologies that diversify the state's energy generation portfolio reduces electricity supply shortages, price spikes, and harmful air pollutant emissions.

There are a number of states in New England that have established renewable portfolio standards. These programs require suppliers of electricity to obtain renewable energy certificates for a portion of their total energy portfolio. Currently, the Whitefield Power and Light facility receives certificates from Connecticut. The Public Service Company of New Hampshire's Northern Wood Project, which will replace a coal boiler with a state-of-the-art wood plant, is slated to receive certificates from the Massachusetts market. We recommend that any consideration of a New Hampshire renewable portfolio standard should include a review of the existing state programs in the region.

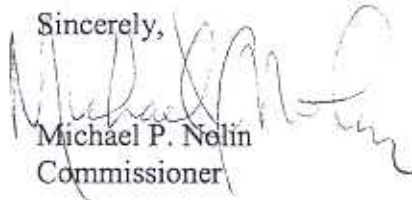
Developing a renewable portfolio standard is consistent with the public policy goals regarding environmental improvement established in **RSA Title 34 Public Utilities Chapter 374-F: 3, VIII**, which calls for a meaningful increase in the number of

renewable energy resources and increased investment in improving renewable energy technologies.

Supporting development of renewable energy resources further supports the principles of continued environmental protection and long-term environmental sustainability by moving toward lower emission energy sources.

Thank you for the opportunity to offer our comments regarding HB1146. If you have any questions regarding these comments, please feel free to contact Air Resources Division Director Robert Scott (271- 1088) or Joanne Morin (271-5552).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Michael P. Nolin", is written over the typed name and title.

Michael P. Nolin
Commissioner

cc: Members of the Science, Technology & Energy Committee
Representative Harvey
Representative Ryan
Senator Hassan
Senator Green